

Viewpoint

Key dates for your finances

Why you should get mortgage advice

Look beyond the price of your protection policy



01 April

National Living Wage (*for age 25+*) rises to £8.21.

National Minimum Wage rises to
 £7.70 (*21 - 24-year olds*),
 £6.15 (*18 - 20-year olds*),
 £4.35 (*16 - 17-year olds*), and
 £3.90 (*apprentices under 19 or in the first
 year of their apprenticeship*).

Council tax bills rise by an average of 4.5%.

Universal Credit for households with children and those with disabilities can earn is to go up £1,000.

21 June

Go Home on Time Day: part of a national campaign to highlight the importance of having a good work-life balance. Leave on time and do something you love!

01 July

New rules mean mobile phone providers must make switching easier.

31 July

Tax credit renewal deadline for anyone who claims Working Tax Credit or Child Tax Credit.

05 April

End of the 2018/19 tax year.

06 April

Start of the 2019/20 tax year.

ISA allowance remains at £20,000.

Junior ISA allowance goes up to £4,368.

Minimum auto-enrolment contributions go up to 8% (*at least 3% from the employer and 5% from the employee*).

State Pension rises by 2.6%. Recipients of the old State Pension will get an extra £3.25 a week, those with the new State Pension will get an extra £4.25.

Lifetime allowance for tax free pension saving rises to £1,055,000.

Personal allowance rises to £12,500.

Higher rate tax threshold goes up to £50,000.

Mortgage interest relief for landlords goes down to 25% Call us if this impacts you.

29 August

Payment Protection Insurance (PPI) Deadline day – you have until 11.59pm to claim for mis-sold PPI.

31 October

Paper self-assessment deadline for your return to be with HMRC.

30 November

Help to Buy ISA closes to new savers.

Your financial plan could be impacted by these key dates. Talk to us for advice.

HM Revenue and Customs practice and the law relating to taxation are complex and subject to individual circumstances and changes which cannot be foreseen.

01 May

National Savings and Investments index-linked savings to CPI.

2019 Key dates for your finances

Why you should get mortgage advice

Taking out a mortgage could be one of the biggest financial decisions you'll need to make in life, so it's important to get it right.

You could 'go direct' to find the right mortgage for your circumstances – as long as you're prepared to spend time and effort scouring a very competitive market for the lender and deal you feel most comfortable with.

You'll also need to consider things like lender administration and booking fees, the length and type of mortgage you need, valuation costs and repayment methods, all of which can affect the total cost of your loan. And you'll need to take out insurance; for buildings and contents and to protect your mortgage payments if you have to stop work.

Lenders will, of course, be able to give you guidance on any mortgages they offer, but you won't necessarily know how their deals compare to other deals on the market.

Advice from your lender

Unlike lenders, we don't have a vested interest. In fact, as part of Openwork, one of the UK's largest financial adviser networks, we can access competitive rates from most of the UK's best-known lenders, many of which aren't available on the high street.

What's more, we will take the time to get to know you, your circumstances, and your overall financial position. We'll also want to understand what type of mortgage you believe is right for you and talk you through the pros and cons of each option.

Using our expert knowledge and database of several thousand mortgages, we will find the ones most suitable for your needs.

We'll work with you to complete the relevant paperwork and liaise on your behalf with solicitors, valuers and surveyors. We can also talk you through the features and benefits of financial protection for your new property and we'll stay in touch throughout the process – and into the future.

If you'd like more information, or you need help planning your first, or next, property purchase, please get in touch.

Advice from us

Your home may be repossessed if you do not keep up repayments on your mortgage



Look beyond the price of your protection policy

Most of us celebrate the start of life and pay tribute to the end of life, but are we placing enough importance on everything in between?

If we're lucky we'll enjoy certain life events like finding a lifelong partner, marriage / civil partnership, having children, enjoying a career and, ultimately, retiring. But how many of us take out financial protection in the event our plans go awry?

Clearly life isn't always plain sailing and we will face obstacles and challenges to overcome. When these challenges are more serious, for instance if accident, illness or death strike, protection insurance can help provide a safety net.

And when it comes to protection, we hold two firm beliefs:

- 1 It should form the foundation of most people's financial plan.
- 2 Cover should be reviewed regularly to make sure it continues to meet your needs.

The second principle is particularly important when you're at a particular 'life' stage. Whether that's buying a house, getting married, starting a family, setting up in business, or all the above, protection insurance will help to protect your loved ones and your financial responsibilities.

But it's important to look beyond the headlines when taking out protection as many providers will offer added-value benefits beyond an initial pay out, that can really help you adapt and cope to potentially life-changing circumstances.

These additional benefits could be anything from access to expert medical opinion, rehabilitation to get you back to work as quickly as possible, bereavement counselling, or even global treatment.

When using comparison sites and direct insurers, care should be taken to make sure their 'off-the-peg' solutions meet your specific needs. Using our expert product knowledge, we can help find the right solution with the right value-added benefits for you.

For more information or to discuss a protection shortfall, please get in touch.

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